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*Contact:* bcstats.infoline@gov.bc.ca *Issue: 11-20* *May 20th, 2011*

- **Inflation falls back to 2.7%**
- **Retail sales eke out 0.2% gain**
- **Manufacturing sales gain an additional 2.2%**

## Prices

- **Consumer prices in British Columbia rose 2.7% in April compared to the same month in 2010.** Rising energy costs (+11.0%) continued to be the main driver of inflation due to the increasing prices of gasoline (+19.8%) and fuel oil (+25.5%). On the other hand, the price of electricity saw its weakest increase (+0.6%) since July 2009. Excluding energy, the Consumer Price Index rose 2.1%.

  Grocery store bills rose 2.3% over the last 12 months as the price of meat (+3.8%), coffee & tea (+10.3%) and non-alcoholic beverages (+10.5%) took a larger bite out of household budgets. The increase in overall food prices (+4.0%), however, was driven mostly by a continued climb in the cost of restaurant meals (+7.3%).

  The cost of shelter rose 1.0% as homeowner insurance premiums (+10.8%) and property taxes (+4.8%) both increased steadily. The rising price of utility bills eased slightly (+0.3%) compared to previous months. The cost of natural gas continued to fall (-7.4%), further mitigating utility costs.

  The cost of maintaining a household inched up (+1.4%) in April as prices associated with household operations (+3.7%) advanced. This increase was offset as the cost of furnishing a house (-2.9%) and that of household appliances (-3.8%) fell sharply.

  Transportation costs climbed sharply (+6.1%) as the cost of both private (+5.8%) and public (+8.0%) transportation rose during the month. Gasoline prices (+19.8%) put upward pressure on private automobile operating costs (+5.8%) and intercity transportation (+9.9%).

  Clothing (-3.5%) and footwear (-4.1%) costs continued to weaken. Health (+1.3%) and personal (+2.5%) care advanced modestly, as did prices for recreation (+2.9%) and education and reading (+3.2%).

  Inflation levels in BC's two largest cities mirrored one another, posting similar increases in April. Vancouver registered a 2.6% jump, while prices rose 2.7% in Victoria over the same period. *Data Source: Statistics Canada*

## The Economy

- **Sales at British Columbia's retailers inched up 0.2% (*seasonally adjusted*) in March, continuing its recovery of the previous month.** Quebec (+0.5%) and Atlantic Canada also saw moderate increases in sales. Nationally retail sales remained flat (0.0%) as gains were offset by weaker sales in the provinces of Ontario (-0.8%), Manitoba (-0.3%) and Alberta (-0.1%).

  During the first quarter of 2011, BC's retail sales fell 1.3% (*seasonally adjusted*), offsetting gains from the last quarter of 2010 (+1.7%) almost entirely. Quebec (-0.6%) and Ontario (-0.1%) bucked this trend in a similar fashion, while retail sales in Manitoba (+1.8%), Saskatchewan (+2.3%) and Alberta (+0.3%) enjoyed gains in the same quarter. Nationally, retails sales for the first quarter remained flat (0.0%). *Data Source: Statistics Canada*

- **The number of British Columbians receiving regular employment insurance (EI) benefits was 69,920 in March, notably lower (-6%,**

**Report** Labour Market Characteristics of the BC Immigrant Population

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Only one in four Twitter users (24%) share their location via tweets, while three in four (72%) post updates related to their personal life, activities or interests. *Source: Pew Research Centre*

***seasonally adjusted*) than the previous month.** All provinces recorded a decline in recipients, such that the number of beneficiaries nationwide dropped by 3.0% (to 606,240). The most substantial changes were seen in Alberta (−6.7% from February) and Manitoba (−5.2%). *Data Source: Statistics Canada*

- **The total number of hours worked in British Columbia's business sector climbed 2.4% between 2009 and 2010, as employment increased 3.0% while the average number of hours workers spent on the job inched down 0.5%.** Among BC's goods-producing businesses, total hours worked were up 2.5% last year, and the service industries posted a similar increase (+2.4%). In 2009, businesses across the country adjusted to the economic downturn by sharply reducing hours worked. In 2010, most of these declines were at least partially reversed.

  Overall labour market conditions improved among the provinces with the change in labour productivity (GDP per hour worked) ranging from +0.3% in Quebec to +6.5% in Saskatchewan. Labour productivity among businesses in BC increased 2.1% in 2010, well above the Canadian average (+1.6%). Last year, the average hourly compensation rose 0.2% in the province, compared to a 1.7% boost at the national level. *Data Source: Statistics Canada*

- **Manufacturing sales in British Columbia rose 2.2% (*seasonally adjusted*) in March, building on a relatively uneventful (+0.1%) February.** Sales of non-durables climbed (+2.2%) due in part to solid gains made by the paper (+7.5%) and plastics & rubber (+5.6%) product industries. Durables were up 2.1% as flagging sales by manufacturers of primary metal (−1.6%) and non-metallic mineral (−0.2%) products were offset by jumps in shipments by producers of other types of goods, such as wood products (+1.4%), machinery (+1.8%) and transportation equipment (+11.9%).

  Canada-wide, manufacturing sales were up 1.9% with higher sales reported in 15 of 21 industries. Newfoundland & Labrador (+25.8%) recorded the largest monthly boost, while Manitoba (−1.7%) was the only province to see a slowdown. *Data Source: Statistics Canada*

- **British Columbia's wholesale sales were flat (0.0%, *seasonally adjusted*) in March, following a slight decline in February (−0.9%).** Despite several months of variability, sales were at a notably higher level than in March of 2010 (+4.0%).

  A similar picture was painted nationally, with wholesale sales inching up 0.1%, on the heels of a 0.9% decline recorded in February. Gains in the miscellaneous (+2.3%) and motor vehicle & parts (+0.6%) sectors were counteracted by losses in others, primarily for food, beverage & tobacco (−0.4%) and machinery, equipment & supplies (−0.6%). Sales were up in five provinces in March, most notably in Saskatchewan (+5.9%), Newfoundland & Labrador (+4.6%), and Alberta (+1.9%). Despite the recent lacklustre sales, Canadian wholesale sales stood 6.0% higher than in March of last year. *Data Source: Statistics Canada*

## Tourism

- **The volume of non-resident travel to Canada via British Columbia slipped 1.0% (seasonally adjusted) in March.** Overall, the decline can be attributed to fewer US-residents arriving in BC (-1.6%), with the number of both overnight stays (−2.1%) and same-day visits (−0.7%) edging down. Entries from overseas locations were up slightly (+1.3%) despite a second consecutive decline in the number of travellers from Asia (−6.0%), particularly from quake-ravaged Japan (−37.9%). However, the number of people arriving in BC from Europe (+7.0%) and other overseas locations (+7.2%) jumped ahead. *Data Source: Statistics Canada*



For data originating from Statistics Canada, data sourced to 'Statistics Canada' has been retrieved from CANSIM, the agency's electronic database; otherwise the source is identified as 'SC' plus the catalogue number.

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# Labour Market Characteristics of the BC Immigrant Population

### Immigrant employment rates

Since January 2006, Statistics Canada has been collecting data through the monthly Labour Force Survey (LFS) on the labour market characteristic of immigrants in Canada. In general, immigrants tend to have lower employment rates† in full- and part-time jobs compared to individuals born in Canada. The full-time employment rate gap between the Canadian-born and foreign-born population (age 15 plus) is notable with a difference of 6.1 percentage points. Recent immigrants who landed between 5 and 10 years ago had the highest employment rates in both the full- and part-time categories of all landed immigrants in 2010 (49.5% and 12.9% respectively). This is partially due to the higher proportion of working age individuals (25-54) in the recent immigrant (landed 5 to 10 years ago) category. Recent immigrants are comprised of over 70.5% working age individuals, while established immigrants (10+ years) only have a 41.8% share of working age individuals.

Employment rates of immigrants by period of landing and Canadian-born in percent, population (15 plus)

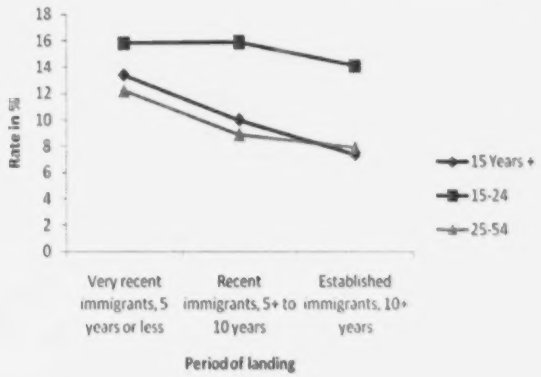
| | Full-time | Part-time |
|---|---|---|
| **Total population** | **46.9** | **13.6** |
| Total landed immigrants | 42.8 | 10.9 |
| Very recent immigrants (5 years or less) | 45.5 | 12.1 |
| Recent immigrants (5 to 10 years) | 49.5 | 12. 9 |
| Established immigrants (10+ years) | 41.2 | 10.3 |
| Non-landed immigrants | 40.6 | 9.7 |
| Born in Canada | 48.9 | 14.8 |

*Source: Labour Force Survey 2010, Statistics Canada*

† The employment rate (or the employment population ratio) is the number of persons employed expressed as a percentage of the population.

Very recent immigrants (landed 5 years or less) and recent immigrants (landed 5 to 10 years ago) face higher unemployment rates than established immigrants (10+ years). In 2010, very recent immigrants between the ages of 25-54 had an unemployment rate of 12.2%; this is 4.3 percentage points higher than the unemployment rate of established immigrants (7.9%). As shown below this pattern holds true for all age categories. In addition to period of landing, there are several other factors that can influence unemployment rates including educational attainment, language barriers, foreign credentials, and knowledge of labour market conditions.

Unemployment rates by age group, 2010

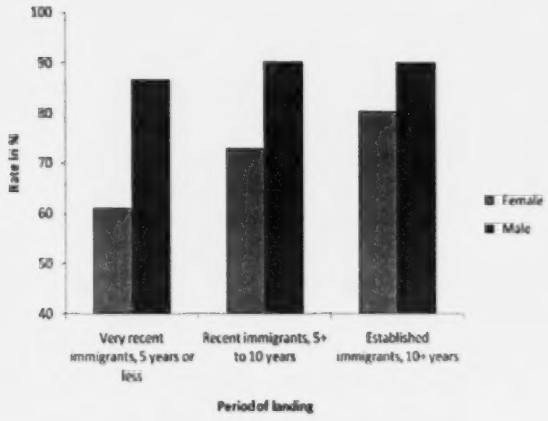



*Source: Labour Force Survey 2010, Statistics Canada*

When observing the labour force participation rates between men and women of identical immigration statuses (i.e., very recent, 5 years or less), there is a disparity. Female immigrants tend to have lower participation rates than male immigrants, regardless of the date of landing. Canadian-born women also tend to have lower participation rates than men; however, the difference is not as pronounced—82.9% for women compared with 90.8% for men (25 to 54 years of age). Very recent immigrant women have a labour

force participation rate of 60.9% – 25.6 percentage points lower than their male counterparts.

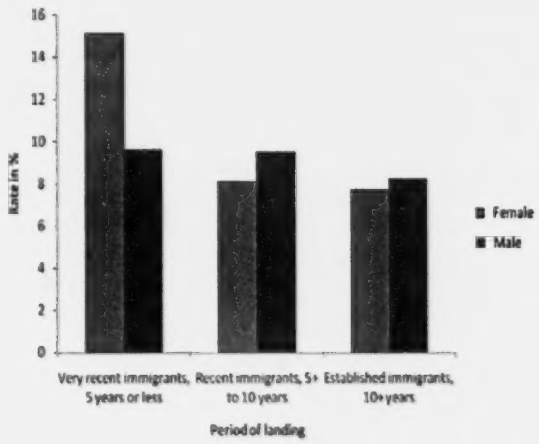
Participation rates by gender (25-54 years of age), 2010




*Source: Labour Force Survey 2010, Statistics Canada*

The unemployment rates for the core working age immigrant women (25-54 years) are on the rise – the unemployment rate increased from 5.3% in 2008 to 7.5% in 2009 and finally to 8.9% in 2010. Canadian-born women of the same age have much lower unemployment rates for the same periods, with their 2008 unemployment rate of 3.5% increasing to 5.5% in 2009 and edging down slightly to 5.2% in 2010. Additionally, from 2009 to 2010, Canadian-born women (25-54) have had lower unemployment rates than Canadian-born men whose unemployment rates have been 7.3% in 2009 and 6.9% in 2010. This pattern of lower unemployment rates for women holds true for established and recent immigrants but not for very recent immigrants.

Unemployment rates by gender (25-54 years of age), 2010




*Source: Labour Force Survey 2010, Statistics Canada*

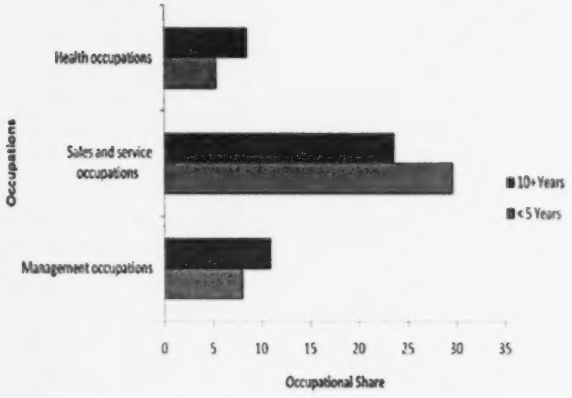
## Occupational mix of immigrants

The occupations that garner the largest proportion of immigrant workers are the sales and service occupations; business, finance and administrative occupations and finally; trades, transport and equipment operator occupations. Sales and service occupations employ 25.4% of immigrant workers, while business, finance and administrative occupations and trades, transport and equipment operators employ 16.7% and 14.0% of immigrants respectively. As a side note, both Canadian-born individuals and landed immigrants enter the noted occupations at similar rates.

The time of landing appears to have an impact on the individual's likelihood of being employed within a specific occupation group. For example, the following graph illustrates that an individual who has been in the country for more than 10 years are more likely to be employed in a health occupation than an individual who landed less than 5 years ago – 8.5% and 5.3% respectively. Conversely, an immigrant who landed less than 5 years ago is more likely to be employed in a sale or service occupation when compared to an es-

tablished immigrant (10+ years) (29.7% and 23.6% respectively).

Selected occupation rates for immigrants (25-54 years of age), 2010

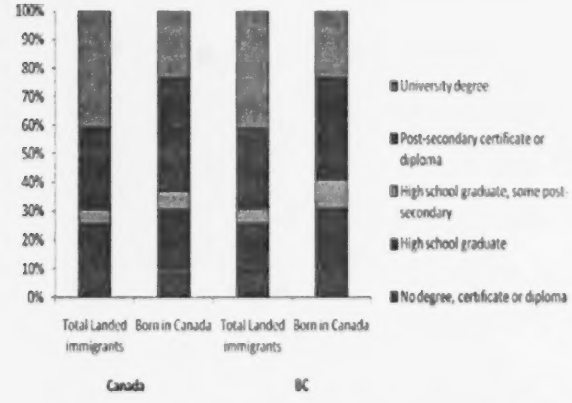



*Source: Labour Force Survey 2010, Statistics Canada*

### Education levels and employability

According the Labour Force Survey, of the total landed immigrants; over 69% hold a post-secondary credential (university degree, post secondary diploma or certificate). The educational make-up of BC's immigrant population is similar to Canada's immigrant population's educational attainment distribution.

Education attainment (25-54 years of age), 2010




*Source: Labour Force Survey 2010, Statistics Canada*

Based on the previous chart, when compared to Canada as a whole, BC's landed immigrants have a slightly higher proportion of university degree holders (41% for BC and 40% for Canada). The proportion of landed immigrants in BC with a post-secondary certificate or diploma is 28.2%; this is slightly less than Canada's rate of 29.0% and far less than BC's Canadian-born population (35.9%).

The following table shows that a landed immigrant holding a university degree is more likely to be employed full-time as period of landing increases. The full-time employment rate for very recent immigrant was 53.5% in 2010; this is 14.9 percentage points less than the full-time employment rate for those who have been in Canada for more than 10 years (established immigrants).

Employment rates of immigrants by period of landing and Canadian-born with university degree in percent, population aged 25-54, BC, 2010

| | Full-time | Part-time |
|---|---|---|
| Very recent immigrants, 5 years or less | 53.5 | 10.7 |
| Recent immigrants, 5+ to 10 years | 66.3 | 9.4 |
| Established immigrants, 10+ years | 68.4 | 13.3 |
| Born in Canada | 74.8 | 14.7 |

*Source: Labour Force Survey 2010, Statistics Canada*

Interestingly, if we compare unemployment rates for individuals of the same educational attainment, between landed immigrants and Canadian-born individuals, the largest disparity occurs with those who hold a bachelor degree. Canadian-born bachelor degree holders (25-54) had an unemployment rate of 3.8% in 2010 while immigrants with the same education level have an unemployment rate of 9.3%, a difference of 5.5 percentage points.

**Summary**

In general, the time of landing has large implications for the labour market success of BC immigrants. The data suggests that as the length of residency increases, the individual is more likely to be employed full-time. It is also observed that the unemployment rate for landing immigrants (15 years and over) declines drastically when the individual moves from very recent (landing less than 5 years ago) to recent immigrant status (more than 5 years ago) (13.4% vs. 7.8%).

For more information on the Labour Force Characteristics of the Immigrant Population please visit:
http://www.bcstats.gov.bc.ca/data/lss/lfs/imm/imm.asp

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## WORKSHOP TOPICS INCLUDE:

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- Maximizing response rates

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- Leading, loaded & sensitive questions
- Logical flow of questions

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## BC at a glance . . .

| POPULATION (thousands) | Jan 1/2011 | % change on one year ago |
|---|---|---|
| BC | 4,554.1 | 1.2 |
| Canada | 34,278.4 | 1.1 |
| **GDP and INCOME (Released Nov 4)** | | |
| *(BC - at market prices)* | 2009 | % change on one year ago |
| Gross Domestic Product (GDP) *($ millions)* | 191,006 | -3.4 |
| GDP *($ 2002 millions)* | 161,851 | -1.8 |
| GDP *($ 2002 per Capita) (reflects revised pop)* | 36,287 | -3.5 |
| Personal Disposable Income *($ 2002 per Capita)* | 25,374 | -1.9 |
| **TRADE ($ millions, seasonally adjusted)** | | % change on prev. month |
| Manufacturing Shipments - Mar 2011 | 3,215 | 2.2 |
| Merchandise Exports - Mar 2011 | 2,678 | 3.7 |
| Retail Sales - Mar 2011 | 4,851 | 0.2 |
| **CONSUMER PRICE INDEX** | % change on | 12-month avg |
| *(all items - Apr 2011)* | one year ago | % change |
| BC | 2.7 | 1.9 |
| Vancouver | 2.6 | 2.2 |
| Victoria | 2.7 | 1.6 |
| Canada | 3.3 | 2.1 |
| **LABOUR FORCE (thousands)** | | % change on |
| *(seasonally adjusted)* | Apr 2011 | prev. month |
| Jobs Created (-Lost) - BC | 8.9 | |
| Labour Force - BC | 2,467.6 | 0.1 |
| Employed - BC | 2,272.9 | 0.4 |
| Unemployed - BC | 194.7 | -2.6 |
| | | Mar 2011 |
| Unemployment Rate - BC *(percent)* | 7.9 | 8.1 |
| Unemployment Rate - Canada *(percent)* | 7.6 | 7.7 |
| **INTEREST RATES (percent)** | May 18/2011 | May 19/2010 |
| Prime Business Rate | 3.00 | 2.25 |
| Conventional Mortgages - 1 year | 3.70 | 3.70 |
| - 5 year | 5.69 | 6.10 |
| **US-CANADA EXCHANGE RATE** | May 18/2011 | May 19/2010 |
| *(avg. noon spot rate)* Cdn $ per US $ | 0.9723 | 1.0515 |
| *(closing rate)* US $ per Cdn $ | 1.0303 | 0.9577 |
| **AVERAGE WEEKLY WAGE RATE** | | % change on |
| *(industrial aggregate - dollars)* | Apr 2011 | one year ago |
| BC | 828.11 | 1.1 |
| Canada | 837.75 | 2.9 |

**SOURCES:**

Population, Gross Domestic Product, Trade, Prices, Labour Force, Wage Rate } Statistics Canada

Interest Rates, Exchange Rates: Bank of Canada Weekly Financial Statistics

For latest Weekly Financial Statistics see www.bankofcanada.ca

### 2010 BC Apprenticeship Student Outcomes Survey Summary Report

The 2010 Apprenticeship Student Outcomes (APPSO) Survey was conducted with former students who completed the final year of their apprenticeship training in a B.C. post-secondary institution between July 1, 2008 and June 30, 2009. Approximately six months later, from January to April of 2010, 2,750 former students from 29 institutions (14 public and 15 private) participated in survey telephone interviews - the gross response rate was 56 percent. For more information on BC Student Outcomes, visit BC Student Outcomes

http://outcomes.bcstats.gov.bc.ca/Libraries/APPSO_Reports/2010_Apprenticeship_Report_pdf.pdf

### File Finder

BC Stats has created a powerful new tool to find small area data on the web site. Users can filter on an area type or a specific location, time period, product, and subject. The File Finder app is still very much under development and only a few products have been linked into it as yet, but it is already quite useful so we decided to share it with you and ask you to help guide its further development. File Finder locates data files. If you are looking to search through our articles use the top bar tab called Analytical Reports.

http://www.bcstats.gov.bc.ca/filefinder.asp

### Canada Votes – Know Your Riding

On May 2nd Canadians went to the polls. Our Federal Electoral District profiles will help you to understand the characteristics that define your constituency.

http://www.bcstats.gov.bc.ca/data/cen06/profiles/detailed/ch_fed.asp

### Released this week by BC Stats

- Consumer Price Index, April 2011

### Next week

- Quarterly Regional Statistics, First Quarter 2011
- Business Indicators, May 2011

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